IN THE CLAIM:

1. (Currently Amended) A process for clearing modes of operation on a respirator with the following steps:

reading data that specify a number of different available modes of operation of the respirator into an external electronic, optical or magnetic storage medium, said data being encoded as a code in said storage medium;

reading and encoding the data by a writing and reading unit associated with the respirator; and

determining the clearing of the available modes of operation on the respirator based on the data read by the writing and reading unit, said data read into the storage medium specifying a time period during which a mode of operation is available for a particular mode of operation.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) A process in accordance with claim ~~3~~ 1, wherein the time period specified is present in the storage medium as a time log for each available mode of operation, from which time log time units during which the clearing of the mode of operation in question is performed can be debited.

5. (Original) A process in accordance with claim 4, wherein a time log kept in the storage medium is filled up by an external writing unit.

6. (Previously Presented) A process in accordance with claim 1, wherein the storage medium element is used for a previously selected class of respirators of the same model or type as the respirator.

7. (Previously Presented) A process in accordance with claim 1, wherein the data being stored in the storage medium can be transferred by the writing and reading unit into a memory of the respirator.

8. (Previously Presented) A process in accordance with claim 1, wherein data being stored in the memory of the respirator can be transferred by the writing and reading unit to the storage medium element.

9. (Previously Presented) A process in accordance with claim 1, wherein the storage medium is a chip card external to the respirator.

10. (Previously Presented) A process in accordance with claim 1, wherein the modes of operation are modes of respiration.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Previously Presented) A respirator system, comprising:

a respirator with a separate data storage medium element connection;

a separate data storage medium element external to said respirator, the storage medium being any one of an electronic, optical or magnetic storage medium connectable to the respirator, the storage medium element having data encoded into a code that specifies a number of different available modes of operation on the respirator, the data and code also determining the clearing of the available modes of operation on the respirator, the data read into the storage medium specifying a time period during which a mode of operation is available for a particular mode of operation;

a selective connection between the data storage medium element and the respirator, said data storage medium element being repetatively connectable to and disconnectable from the respirator by said selective connection;

a writing and reading unit associated with the respirator reading and decoding the code from the data storage medium element; and

a respirator processor clearing the available modes of operation on the respirator based on the reading and decoding of the data from the data storage medium element.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) A system in accordance with claim ~~14~~ 12, wherein the time period specified is present in the storage medium as a time log for each available mode of operation, from which time log time units during which the clearing of the mode of operation in question is performed can be debited.

16. (Original) A system in accordance with claim 15, wherein a time log kept in the storage medium is filled up by an external writing unit.

17. (Presently Presented) A system in accordance with claim 12, wherein the storage medium element is used for a previously selected class of respirators of the same model or type as the respirator.

18. (Presently Presented) A system in accordance with claim 12, wherein the data being stored in the storage medium can be transferred by the writing and reading unit into a memory of the respirator.

19. (Presently Presented) A system in accordance with claim 12, wherein data being stored in the memory of the respirator can be transferred by the writing and reading unit to the storage medium element.

20. (Presently Presented) A system in accordance with claim 12, wherein the storage medium element is a chip card external to the respirator and the modes of operation are modes of respiration.